Marion resident alleges gang activity

BY JOHN D. HOMAN THE SOUTHERN

MARION — LaDreama Burdette had plenty to say about the Marion Police Department Monday and not much of it was good.

Burdette told the city council at its regular meeting that she and family members "had been through a lot the last three months" and demands the police take action on the 20-plus complaints filed with the department about what she describes as gang-related activities in her neighborhood — Midway

Burdette said she is fearful for her family's well being. She said several young men ranging in age from 16 to 20 have brandished pistols on an almost daily basis near her residence and have fired shots at her house and son's car.

She said bricks and rocks have been thrown through windows and her fiancée has been chased from a gas station.

She claims the police are not taking the incidents seriously enough despite repeated calls.

Angela Chambers of Herrin said her son was attacked by a group of the youths for no reason when attending a party at the Motel 6 in Marion recently.

"They're attacking innocent people," Chambers said. "Something needs to be done. I was at the state's attorney's office today trying to get an order of protection."

Police Chief Gene Goolsby said he is well aware of the

issue and described the altercations as family versus family, much like the "Hatfields and the McCoys."

"It's an ongoing feud, which we can't seem to get a handle on yet," Goolsby said. "But we are focusing our attention on that area of town."

Police Commissioner Jay Rix said the concerns raised by Burdette and Chambers will be addressed right away.

"You're not being ignored," he said.

Mayor Bob Butler backed

Mayor Bob Butler backed Rix.

"We will find out what's going on with the police department and these complaints. We will get to the bottom of this issue. I can assure you of that," Butler said.

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BLEYER FIELD: Tract of land ready for development

FROM PAGE 1B

exclusively for commercial purposes.

"The city recognizes that, for the property to develop, there is probably going to need to be a developer who can put together an overall plan that would include a residential component," he said.

Jan Walker has lived a stone's throw from Bleyer Field on Linden Street for about 30 years and said she expects any new development to prove beneficial to all the neighbors.

"I would expect something that would benefit the community on the whole," she said, without specifying what that might be. "Of course, we'd prefer that that not be apartment housing. Hopefully it will be something that will enhance the value of the neighborhood."

Standing in their doorway

two houses up from the field's entrance on Oakland Avenue, Whitney Benline and Justin Quandt said they would like to see some more commercial development in the neighborhood.

"It might be nice to have some more shopping around; all we've got is Schnucks," Benline said. "It doesn't seem like anyone uses (the field) much."

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TOUR: Covers historic buildings in Carbondale

FROM PAGE 1B

bodies before victims' families could claim them.

"And of course, he caught the flu," she said. "But it was up there, on a studio couch, that his wife nursed him back to health, in that turret."

Ittner was joined by Helen Deniston, a 75-year resident of Carbondale, and the stories and background piled up quickly.

Carbondale's first pool, interlocking brick sidewalks

that date back to shortly after the city's founding, and the stories of some of the people who brought these things to life filled the time as the bus rolled on.

For the final stop, preservation commission members selected perhaps Carbondale's most well-known home, the R. Buckminster Fuller Dome on Forest Avenue.

Commission member Kevin Koron said making the Bucky Dome the last stop was an easy choice. "People know where it is and they've seen it — from the outside," he said.

"But a lot of people don't go inside."

A slideshow provided a glimpse of the dome's glory days, when it served as a home to Fuller and his wife.

Members of the city's planning department helped organize the tour and said they expect to have the event again next year.

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DAVE TAYLOR / THE SOUTH

Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton talks Monday about how Washington, D.C., residents do not have full congressional representation and how she continues to fight to win that right.

Congresswoman stands up for right to vote

BY SCOTT FITZGERALD
THE SOUTHERN

CARBONDALE —
Congresswoman Eleanor
Holmes Norton of the District
of Columbia is in a unique
position to talk expertly about
a fundamental notion of
democracy — the right to

Although Norton has led congressional committees and can vote like any other House member at the committee level, she is not allowed to vote on the floor as a representative of the District of Columbia because of a quirky and complex situation over the years that allows

Congress direct jurisdiction over the area that incorporates Washington.

The District of Columbia has no representation at all in the Senate.

"The notion of not being able to express the will of people who you represent is frightening," Norton said during a news conference Monday at the WSIU studios at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Norton, who is in her ninth term in the House and chairs the House Transportation Subcommittee on Economic Development, Emergency Management and Public Buildings, was this year's speaker for the Hiram H. Lesar Distinguished Lecture at the Southern Illinois University School of Law.

She delivered her lecture Monday night in the law school auditorium. During the news conference Norton talked about how the

Norton talked about how the District of Columbia came to get the kind of House nonvoting representation it has today, which she describes as "the 21st century outrage," and what she is doing to get that changed.

"We have passed a bill in the House and it's pending in the Senate," Norton said.

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LAHOOD: Discusses state's past, present and future

FROM PAGE 1B

He also spoke about the current state of Illinois politics and shared a few names of those he considers future political stars in the Land of Lincoln.

"We know three things that the new administration will have to contend with — the war, the economy and energy. Those are three issues we face," LaHood said.

The former junior high school social studies teacher and Bradley University graduate said one of his greatest achievements as a Congressman has been to break through partisan barriers.

"I co-chaired four bipartisan retreats and helped develop friendships that went beyond politics" I allood said

politics," LaHood said.
He remembers being in
Washington during some
unforgettable moments like
Sept. 11, 2001. It prompted
LaHood to vote for President
Bush's invasion of
Afghanistan and later, Iraq.

And he was there for the historic 2006 House vote that propelled Nancy Pelosi as the first female speaker of the House of Representatives.

LaHood said Illinois has lost a lot of senior leaders in Washington, such as Congressman Bob Michel, for whom LaHood worked for as chief of staff, and Congressman Dan Rostenkowski, who chaired the House Ways and

Means Committee.

"Because of the lousy leadership now in Illinois, much has to be replenished," LaHood said, noting two young leaders he considers as rising stars — Illinois Congressman Rahm Emanuel and State Rep. Aaron Schock of Peoria, who won a threeway Republican primary in a quest to succeed LaHood.

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BRIEFLY

Two-car crash injures four, including toddler

FRANKLIN COUNTY — A two-car wreck Sunday near Christopher resulted in injuries for four people.

injuries for four people.

The crash occurred at the intersection of Yellow Banks Road and Illinois 148 just before 2 p.m. when Sandra Key, 18, of Coello, was traveling southbound on Illinois 148 and turned left in front of an oncoming vehicle driven by Stephen Bennett, 33, of Herrin, who was driving northbound, said Capt. Don Jones of the Franklin County Sheriff's Department.

West Frankfort, were taken to

Department. Key and a passenger in her car, Crystal Atchison, 23, of Herrin Hospital for treatment of major injuries. Another passenger in Key's vehicle, a toddler, was also taken to the hospital but with minor injuries. Bennett received minor injuries but refused treatment at the scene.

Two children in Key's car were uninjured.

Key was cited for failure to yield turning left; failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident and three citations for failure to properly secure a child under 8.

— Becky Malkovich

House fire blamed on wiring problem

LAKE OF EGYPT — A problem with electrical wiring is believed to be the

cause of a house fire at the Lake of Egypt on Sunday

afternoon.
Frank Huffstutler, assistant chief with the Lake of Egypt Fire Protection District, said a report of a fire at the Bryan Roberts residence at 6352 Wards Mill Lane was phoned in to the department at 12:51

Firefighters were on the scene for less than two hours. "The fire damage was

contained to one bedroom and there was also smoke and heat damage to the rest of the home," Huffstutler said.

"One female adult was home

at the time of the fire, but there were no injuries." Williamson County Fire

Williamson County Fire Protection District provided mutual aid.

— John Homan